

be exempted from payment of Ground Rent and Royalty for one year for the period from January, 2001 to December, 2001.

As regards the salt refineries, the Government of Gujarat *vide* their Resolution dated 25.2.2001 have announced the following package in respect of small, medium and big industrial units falling in the earthquake zones 4 and 5, and suffered damages:-

- \* "For the repair of damaged building, plant and machinery, an assistance of Rs. 60 lakhs will be paid at the rate of 60 per cent for the new investment.
- \* As per the requirement of the units, bankable loan assistance of Rs. 2 lakh will be paid for two years.
- \* For one year, electricity charges will be recovered on the basis of actual consumption of power instead of minimum electricity bill.
- \* There will be total exemption from the stamp duty chargeable for the legal documents for the implementation of the above relief."

#### Rural Telephones Installed in Assam

2590. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the district-wise details of target fixed by Government for providing rural telephones in Assam during the last three years and till-date; and
- (b) the district-wise details of actual number of rural telephones installed so far in Assam including hilly areas of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRITAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Telecom District-wise targets for providing new telephone connections are fixed by the Circle as a whole i.e. both for rural and urban areas and not separately.

Telecom District-wise (SSA-wise) details of targets and achievements for providing telephones and VPTs (Village Public Telephones) for the last three years and till date are given in the Statement (See below).

Details of achievements of providing telephone connections in the rural areas for Assam including hilly areas of the State as a whole have been compiled

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for the last three years and upto 31.1.2001. These are given below:

Year	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
Telephones Provided in Rural Areas	8,260	6,624	8,115	11,091

**Statement**

***Telecom. District-wise Targets/Achievements for Providing Telephones during the last Three Year and till Date.***

Telecom. District	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01 (upto 28.2.2001)	
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
Kamrup	8,000	8,117	17,000	17,044	17,600	18,008	15,000	16,956
Dibrugarh	5,000	5,006	5,100	5,112	8,500	8,563	8,000	9,405
Silchar	5,000	5,102	7,100	7,276	9,000	9,291	8,000	9,330
Jorhat	5,000	6,009	7,100	7,033	7,000	6,800	6,000	6,125
Bongaigaon	4,500	4,021	4,200	4,210	6,000	6,300	6,000	7,753
Tezpur	4,500	4,009	3,500	3,696	6,300	6,400	6,000	6,262
Nagaon	4,000	4,213	6,000	6,004	5,600	5,800	6,000	4,727
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,477</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,375</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>61,162</b>	<b>55,000</b>	<b>60,558</b>

***Telecom. District-wise Targets/Achievements for Providing VPTs (Village Public Telephones) during the last Three Year and till Date.***

Telecom. District	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		2000-01 (upto 28.2.2001)	
	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
Kamrup	350	301	250	230	20	17	25	13
Dibrugarh.	550	380	300	325	10	9	295	26

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1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	8
Silchar	550	209	350	360	200	183	400	78
Jorhat	750	637	250	225	100	83	215	58
Bongaigaon	500	214	250	271	100	159	1,725	21
Tezpur	600	284	900	895	150	201	1,330	50
Nagaon	700	459	600	601	120	174	1,010	64
TOTAL:	4,000	2,484	2,900	2,907	700	826	5,000	310

**Open forum for consumer in Faridabad**

**2591. SHRI ANIL SHARMA:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in Hindustan Times (Faridabad Live) on 26th February, 2001 captioned BSNL holds first open forum of consumers;

(b) if so, the reasons for not giving adequate publicity to the open forum for attracting good number of consumers;

(c) the details of the suggestions given by the consumers; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by BSNL on the suggestion given by Faridabad consumers to improve the functioning of the Department?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Open House Session was meant for Nehru Ground Exchange, Sector 23 Exchange and Pali Exchange area only. Adequate publicity was given and 33 persons attended the Session, covering all the sections of society.

(c) (i) The system of complaints may be made objective by declaring each lineman/JTO area to be profit center.

(ii) Further improvement in services to be organized to compete with private telephone operators expected in this field.

(iii) Cable laying to be done for five year plan instead of annual expansion plan.

(iv) Payment of bills through cash cards to be introduced.